GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

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CONTENTS FOR WEEK OF JANUARY 11, 1926. Vol. IV. No. 23.

1. The Greek-Bulgar Border Where a War Was Stopped.
2. The Ocean Incorporated Into the Bromine Business.
3. Nice: Capital of the Riviera.
4. The Greatest Seasonal Migration of Modern Times.
5. Kurds: Innocent Bystanders in the Mosul Dispute.

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A BULGARIAN WOMAN SPINNING AS SHE WALKS
(See Bulletin No. 1.)

HOW TO OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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The Greek-Bulgar Border Where a War Was Stopped

THE FLARE-UP on the Greek-Bulgarian border has subsided into history with Greece's agreement to pay indemnity. Most of the fighting took place in and around the town of Petrich, which would be included in the proposed demilitarized zone between the two nations.

Greece does not look upon the gunless border idea with much favor, arguing that it would be a happy hunting ground for the "comitadjis," which are a species of bandit.

The Greek-Bulgarian boundary line is approximately 200 miles long, but there are very few places where it is easy to penetrate from one country to the other.

Two Gates of the Border

One travel gate is the Maritza River, which runs through Adrianople before turning into Bulgarian territory. But this entrance concerns Turkey also, since the lower reaches of the Maritza form the Turkish-Greek frontier. Petrich is the doorway to a strictly private corridor between Greece and Bulgaria. The town lies close to the Struma River, which cuts its way directly north through the disjointed mountain ranges of the Balkans. The Struma is an avenue to the heart of Bulgaria and to Sofia, as straight and broad as the Hudson is to Albany. Nowhere else between the Struma and the Maritza is there a direct pass to the interior. This doorway to Bulgaria is also within easy reach of the sea. Saloniki, the important Greek city and logical port for most of the Balkan peninsula, is only 50 miles away.

Villages where fighting occurred all lie in the southwest corner of Bulgaria. Many of them figured in the Balkan wars leading up to the World War. Demir Hissar, which served as a Greek concentration point, was the scene of a double massacre in 1913. The defeated Bulgarian army was retreating up the Struma when the Greek inhabitants of Demir Hissar fell upon the Bulgarians.

Before the Greek army reached the scene, the Bulgarian rear guard had exacted swift and bloody vengeance.

"Committee Man" a Dread Name

The "comitadjis," who appear as an obstacle to a truce border, are familiar figures. As translated "comitadjis" means "committee man," which sounds peaceful enough. But the word "comitadjis" is enough to make Greece shiver and the Bulgarian Government shudder.

"Comitadjis" appeared in the Balkan lexicon shortly after the Treaty of San Stephano. England had been sufficiently aroused by the "Bulgarian atrocities" at the hands of the Turk to cooperate with Russia in assuring Bulgaria a measure of freedom. But England could not approve Russia gaining her long-sought outlet to the sea, although it would be only by proxy through Rumania and Bulgaria. Therefore, the Macedonian plain, which is now Grecian territory between Bulgaria and the Aegean Sea, was reserved to Turkey.

Bulgarian residents in the Macedonian plain despaired of further help against the Turk from western Europe, so they organized their "committee men."

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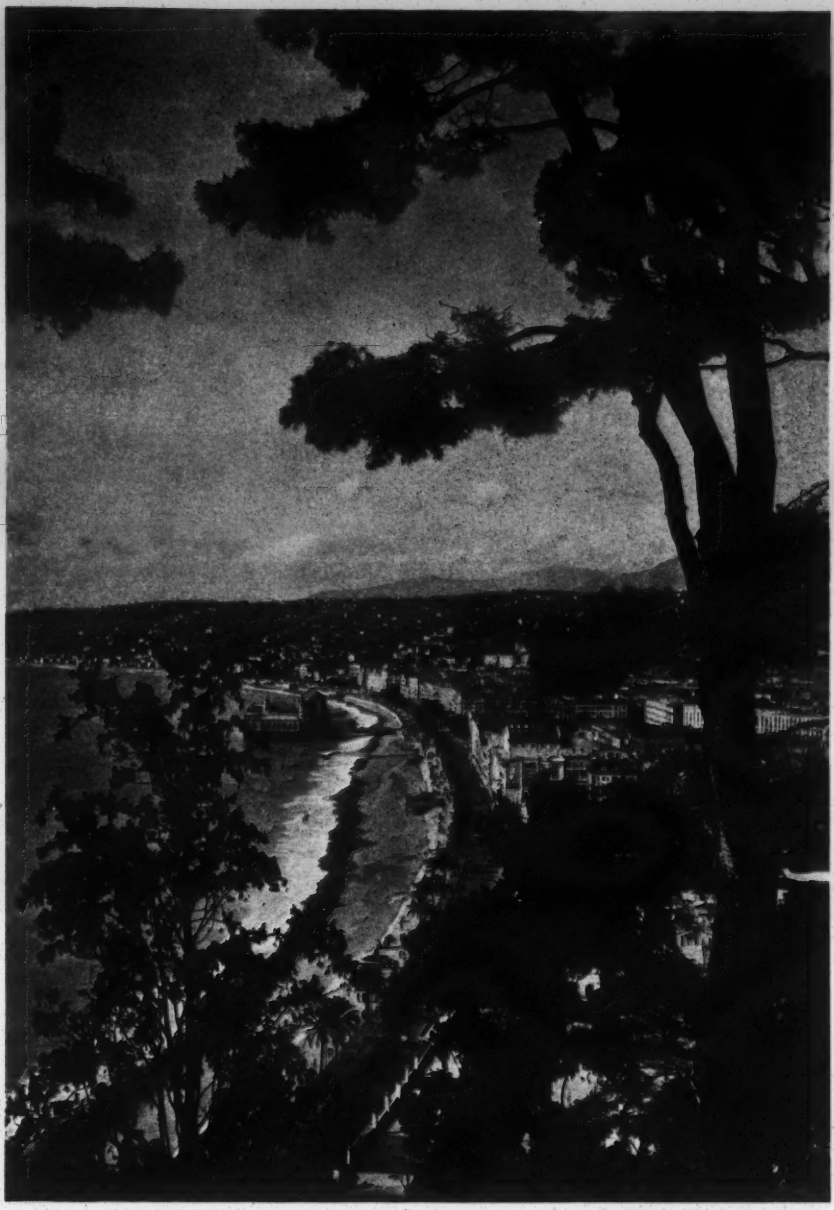

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THE CURVING BEACH OF NICE

Beyond the pier known as the Jette Promenade the esplanade becomes the Promenade des Anglais. In the lower part of the picture can be seen the flat roofs of adjoining houses and shops which once formed the "Terraces," the parade of fashion before the Promenade des Anglais became famous (see Bulletin No. 3).

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The Ocean Incorporated Into the Bromine Business

A FILM of fresh water covers the surface of the salty ocean, according to the recent statement of a scientist. Although the film is .00000004 of a centimeter and therefore so thin that knowledge of it would have helped the Ancient Mariner not at all, this fact can be added to our constantly increasing fund of information about oceans of the earth.

New ways of adapting the oceans to the needs of man are developing constantly. Last spring a ship was sent out for the specific purpose of harvesting bromine from the sea. Bromine was in demand in larger quantities for a compound to improve gasoline, and chemists found that the most economical source was the open ocean.

Chemistry Moves More Swiftly Than Language

In 1906 a popular author divided all people into two kinds, bromides and sulphites. The sulphites, transferring chemical character to men, were the effervescent, eager, bright, original sort; the "illuminati." The bromides were the conservatives, the mild bores, people who were always saying the same things in the same old way.

How little does the world know its chemicals! In less than ten years bromine stepped out of the role assigned it. "Mild, conservative, meek," bromine was one of the first poisonous gases used in the World War. Bromine made civilization gasp in horror. And by a still more recent feat of chemical acrobatics bromine has taken to serving automobile engines: The ship went for bromine to help in the making of an "antiknock" aid. While it does not enter into the compound, it has a finger in the fuel for the explosions which make it possible to describe an automobile engine as "a Gatling gun firing nine thousand shots per minute."

Most people are formally introduced to bromine, the element which forms a part of all bromides, in their high-school days, and they remember it as a distinctly unpleasant smelling, dark brown, heavy liquid that gives off an ugly brown gas readily.

Three Sources of Bromine

The entrance of the "high seas" in the bromine market divides the production between three major sources. The United States and Germany have been the chief producers. The ship sent out was transformed into a floating chemical laboratory prepared to treat 7,000 gallons of water per minute. So small is the bromine content that this large amount of water will only yield between four and five pounds of bromine. Chlorine is employed to treat the water and the extraction process is fairly simple. The chlorine can be used over and over again.

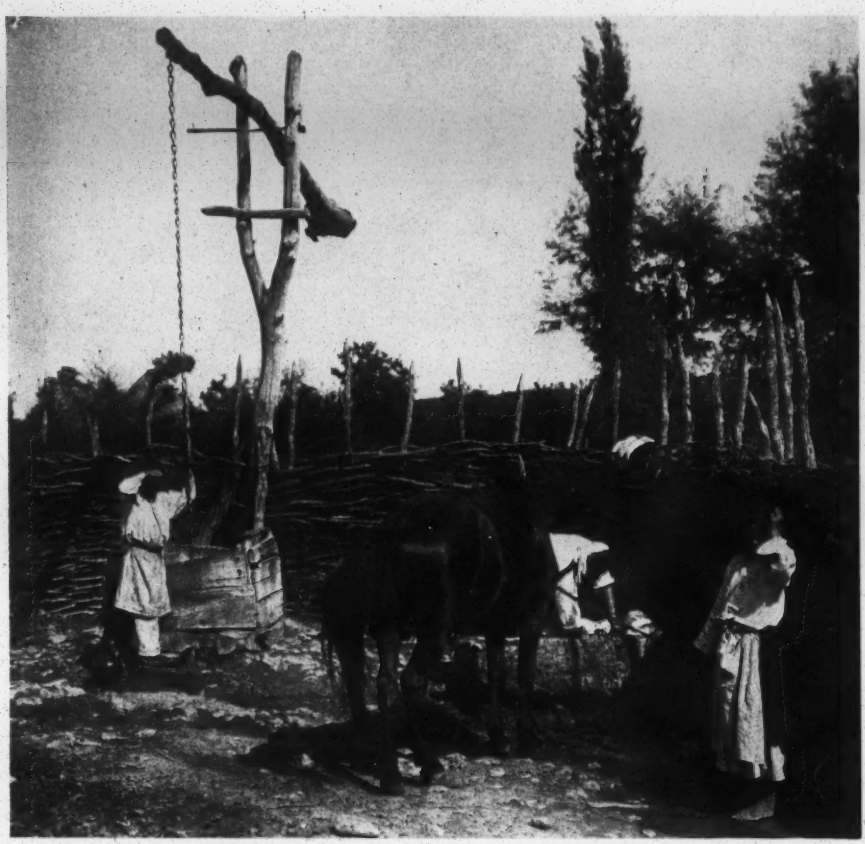
The ship was sent to sea because of the impurities that might occur in shore waters. A further reason suggested was that water taken from the ocean at a great depth contains chemicals more highly concentrated and therefore with more bromine.

These insurgent bands spread a reign of terror. Turkey's customary severe control was revamped into a rule of ruthlessness, but that did not check the "comitadjis." Even women joined the guerrilla bands, enduring camp life, marching mountain trails at night and obeying the strict rules of the insurgents. The story is told of one young woman who joined a band to be with her lover. She began to lag from weariness and the chief ordered her left behind. The "comitadjis" rules permitted no desertion, so when her lover tried to stay behind with her he was executed.

Greeks Give Free Port to Balkans

The Turk's attempt to put down the "comitadjis" rebellion unified the Balkan peoples for once, and in 1912 they very nearly drove Moslem power out of Europe. The advantages of this war were lost by fighting over the spoils in 1913, when Bulgaria was up in arms against all her neighbors. The original "comitadjis" organization did not die and its border raids are believed to be partly the cause of the recent Greek-Bulgar strife.

Bulletin No. 1, January 11, 1926.



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A BULGARIAN FARM SCENE: AT THE WELL

All of the Balkan lands are agricultural. Manufacturing, however, is primitive and of little volume. Outside the larger towns, for the most part, people have hardly learned to need products that cannot be fashioned by the family in the home. Cloth and a few simple household implements of metal constitute the whole demand upon civilization of the average Balkan peasant family (see Bulletin No. 1).

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Nice: Capital of the Riviera

WHEN Nice shivers it is news, which fact is a hint of the delightful winter climate of the Riviera coast.

Nice, however, owes a debt to cold snaps. Its most famous avenue is the product of a frost. There was a considerable English colony in Nice more than a century ago, and some of these seekers of winter sunshine from the British Isles were in the town in 1821 when an unusual cold spell ruined the orange crop. The English vacationists clubbed together and gave the unemployed natives work by building a road along the seashore—Promenade des Anglais. A wag has said that the roadway was built by the unemployed and has been used by the unemployed ever since.

Carnival Marks Height of Nice Season

Nice is often caviled at as too boisterous, too crowded, and too noisy, but it continues despite all that to be the capital of Europe's winter playground, the Riviera. Cannes attracts to its villas and hotels those of quieter tastes, Mentone lures its invalids, while all the other scores of resorts along this sun-bathed Mediterranean coast draw to themselves appropriate groups of those in search of pleasure, rest, or health. But Nice is the meeting place for all as well as the place of temporary residence for thousands who find this bustling city and well-equipped resort, rolled into one, exactly to their liking.

Nice's gaiety rises in crescendo to the carnival which takes place just before the beginning of Lent each spring. This more or less historic celebration, a type for numerous festivals around the world, began as a modest fiesta many years ago. It became an organized celebration in 1871 and has drawn increasing crowds since. It must be admitted, too, that it has grown in rowdyism. There are quiet-loving souls who leave Nice for the carnival just as there are those who flock there for it. The celebration centers about the battle of flowers in the Promenade des Anglais. There are parades that feature the comical as well as the beautiful, and the inevitable dominos, masques, street songs, street dances, horns and confetti.

The chief shopping street in Nice is the Avenue de la Victoire. With its smart shops and smartly dressed shoppers, it is a typical Parisian boulevard in miniature.

Napoleon's Military Road Is a Scenic Wonder

New Nice, with its wide streets and bright buildings, has grown over a large area, almost obscuring quaint Old Nice. One finds the old town in a seemingly compressed quarter across a little torrent from the newer city, between the stream and a blufflike promontory, Castle Hill, which was the acropolis of the earliest settlement. On one side of the stream are narrow, crooked streets, houses centuries old and here and there ruined palaces. It is a medieval-looking place, but is inhabited by thoroughly modern mechanics, tram drivers and other less opulent inhabitants of the city. On the other side of the stream lies the new city with its avenues and promenades, theaters and casinos, sweeping uphill inland to a zone of hotels, palaces and villas.

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Bromine is now obtained chiefly from Michigan and from Stassfurt, Germany. Michigan and Stassfurt happen to be the sites of large salt deposits and deposited with the salt are other chemicals, such as iodine, bromine, and potassium.

World History "Salted Down"

In these deposits world history is salted down and preserved for our knowledge. It is possible to reconstruct prehistoric geography from an exploration of the extent of the beds and the strata recorded in rock salt. At some distant time a great area of the Prussian plain was a bay of the ocean. It was a bay like some of those found today on the east shore of the Caspian Sea where a shallow depression is practically cut off by a sand bar. Drawing the necessary water from the Caspian Sea, these bays crystallize tons upon tons of salt annually, gradually filling themselves up. When salt crystallizes a mother liquor of other minerals, highly concentrated, remains. If the feeder channel is deep, this is drawn off as lighter water flows in. But if the stopper is firm in Nature's huge crystallization vats, the mother liquors themselves crystallize out and leave iodine, bromine, potassium and other substances.

In places the salt deposits in the Stassfurt region are nearly 4,000 feet thick. It is estimated that at least 8,000 years were required for such a deposit. A basin of normal sea water would have to be 30 miles deep to form such a deposit, so it is certain that North Germany was once the site of a Caspian Sea or a Dead Sea.

How the Doctor and Photographer Use Bromine

Bromine is extracted from the mother liquor after the salt is taken out of the brine from the deposit. The process is simple chemically, but the percentage of bromine is so small that the price has long been high.

In medicine and in photography bromine fulfills the part given it by the humorist. Certain bromides are considered excellent sedatives. In the dark room bromides hold back the silver salts in the emulsions on paper and films which are as sensitive to light as the eye of a bat. Bromine is also important to the dye industry.

But it is hard to deny the irony of bromides in their newest roles of speeding enemies to destruction and speeding up automobile engines.

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The Greatest Seasonal Migration of Modern Times

ANOTHER of the rapid succession of changes in Persia during the last few years was the recent deposition of the Kajar dynasty and the ascension of Riza Khan to the position of Shah of Persia. Riza Khan had been prime minister and the real master of affairs in Persia since 1923.

Whatever may happen in Teheran, the Persian capital, has little effect on the Bakhtiari tribesmen, lawless and frequently rebellious nomads of Persia's "wild west." These tribesmen are modern prototypes of the Children of Israel except that, in the case of the Bakhtiaris their pilgrimage is accomplished every six months, their objective is grass for their cattle, rather than a land of "milk and honey," and they traverse snow-covered mountains, icy streams, and other obstacles along what has been called the "wickedest 200 miles in all the world."

Thunder of Half a Million Hoofs!

Along with 50,000 of the men, women and children on their semi-annual Odyssey go some half a million cattle. The tribesmen live on the cattle and the cattle live on grass. Only during the winter months is there grazing on the scorching littoral of the Persian Gulf; and only in the summer months is there grass on the plateau country back of the Bakhtiari mountain range. Hence people and cattle have to move with the seasons.

When the Bakhtiaris knock down their black and orange and white tents to go in search of grass they pile their household effects on the backs of their animals, and atop these cargoes ride the lambs, the calves and the chickens. Their women strap to their backs their crude wooden cradles, in which they carry their babies and their husbands' guns.

Goats Decline to Swim

If an observer would get the epic quality of this mammoth migration he should station himself beside a stream—one of the torrential, icy cold mountain rivers. First the tribesmen make rafts underlaid with inflated goatskins and on these they entrust women and children, the younger animals and their meager household effects. Then they drive their horses, cows, and sheep into the swirling stream. The goats alone refuse to swim and, perhaps in return for the use of their dead comrades' skins, cross on the rafts.

The roar of the falls above, the screeching of animals, the cries of the dying beasts caught in whirlpools, and the yelling of the men go to make up a din that is weird and unparalleled. Finally the men themselves take the icy plunge. This scene is not a matter of hours, but of days, and the crossing is continued through the moonlight nights.

Cross Snow Trails in Bare Feet

The next high light of the trip comes with the mountains where men and women discard shoes and break trails through snow-filled ravines and along icy passes, ever higher and higher, until, when the summit is reached, the weaker humans and animals have been left bleeding, freezing and starving on the steep

Although many criticize Nice for its modernity and its too-rapid growth, all agree that its setting on a spacious, sparkling bay enfolded by green and lavender hills, is superb. To see the city and its surroundings at their best one should ride over the famous Grande Corniche Road. From Nice it climbs to a high shelf (the name means "great cornice or shelf") on the inland hills overlooking the entire region both seaward and off to the snow-capped Alps. Napoleon built the road between 1805 and 1812 for the military expeditions toward Italy. Now it is given over almost entirely to pleasure traffic. Over it "during the season" whiz char-a-bancs and motorbuses and private cars. After warm weather brings an end to the season this road of incomparable views is almost deserted.

Bulletin No. 3, January 11, 1926.

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GATHERING SALT IN ARABIAN DESERT

Large quantities of common salt are obtained from brine springs, numerous in Arabia. With salt deposits are generally found deposits of bromine and other chemical salts (see Bulletin No. 2).

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Kurds: Innocent Bystanders in the Mosul Dispute

KURDS as well as the Nestorian Christians in the Mosul region have fared badly at the hands of the Turks, according to the report filed by the special investigating commission of the League of Nations.

The Latvian general, head of the League commission, claimed that Kurd chieftains had been executed for not cooperating in the persecution of the Christians who are their neighbors and that some Kurds had been compelled to flee for their lives into Irak, the British mandate. The Nestorian or Assyrian Christians against whom the Turkish wrath has been directed principally, are a last remnant of the once extensive Christian Church in Asia. (See Mosul Boundary Dispute Threatens Ancient Christian Tribe—Bulletin No. 13, Oct. 26.)

The Kurds have a reputation for fighting which ought to save them from severe treatment by the Turk. They have taken to the warpath off and on for the last 30 or 35 centuries.

Fighters Since History Began

The Kurds would probably be awarded the fighting endurance record of the world by almost any jury after a little delving into history. The days of Assyrian power in Mesopotamia seem pretty far back toward the beginnings of history. Records of that empire show that time and again its soldiers were sent into the rough country around the headwaters of the great rivers to subdue the mountaineers—ancestors of the Kurds—who harried Assyria's outlying settlements. These same mountaineers fought the Armenians when the latter came into the region between 600 and 1000 B. C.

When Xenophon retreated from Asia Minor in 401 B. C. the Kurds (then called the Carduchi) attacked his 10,000 Greeks, rolling great stones down on them from cliffs and mountains. They fought continually against the Bagdad Caliphs. Since the Turks rose to power in Asia Minor the Kurds have fought them repeatedly; in fact, the Turks have never established any considerable measure of control over these fierce, freedom-loving highlanders.

Since the Great War the European territory of Turkey has been small. The country has consisted almost solely of the big, fat peninsula lying between the Black Sea on the north and the eastern arm of the Mediterranean on the south, and an extension to the east about as broad as the Asia Minor peninsula, reaching roughly half way from the Black Sea to the Caspian. The southern half of this eastern extension—the southeastern corner of postwar Turkey—is Kurdistan.

Spread Into Three Countries

The other half of the eastern extension, immediately north of Kurdistan, was once Turkish Armenia. Now that tens of thousands of the Armenian residents have been driven across the Russian border, while other tens of thousands have perished, the region hardly deserves the old name. The Kurdish population was always high in Turkish Armenia; now it is proportionately much greater. The whole eastern end of present Turkey, constituting almost a third of the territory of the country, therefore, may roughly be considered the Kurdish sphere of influence.

Geographic and political and economic complications aplenty are found in

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trails. A panorama of the serpentine line, twisting and twining from the valley below, as far as the eye can see, is one of the most remarkable spectacles of human geography. The climax of the mountain climbing comes with the ascent of the giant and seemingly inaccessible Zardeh Kuh, some 12,000 feet high.

The Bakhtiaris do not bow to Teheran; they continually are at war with the Lurs and other neighboring tribesmen. They are ruled by tribal chieftains. Their men value women lightly, using them as beasts of burden, and pay slight attention to their daughters. Their sons they teach to shoot and swim and ride by the time they are nine or ten years old.

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A PERSIAN MOHAMMEDAN PRAYING

The Koran commands: "Wherefore glorify God when the evening overtaketh you, and when ye rise in the morning, and unto Him be praise in Heaven and earth; and in the evening, and when ye rest at noon." Note the prayer rug (see Bulletin No. 4).

this region. On the east Kurdistan touches Persia, and the people for a considerable distance into that country are Kurds, too. Indeed, Kurdish people inhabit the entire Zagros mountain range, which extends from Turkey for 600 miles to the southeast, forming the boundary between Persia and Irak. The map as drawn by the European peace treaties shows the southern border of Kurdistan about 100 miles north of Mosul, which city is shown to be in Irak. But this is not the boundary in the eyes of the Kurds. They claim the territory extending some miles south of Mosul. Except in Mosul city, the population of this region is almost solidly Kurdish. The French mandate of Syria wedges in near Mosul and still further complicates the political situation.

It is the odor and power of petroleum that in some ways dominates all else in the region however. What promises to become one of the major oil fields of the world centers about Mosul, and it is because of British interest in this fact, the Turks assert, that the northern boundary of the British protectorate of Irak was pushed so far north. The Turks insist—and the Kurds agree with them as to this—that this is only a "paper boundary" and that the actual frontier must be fixed finally farther to the south.

An Example of Geography Molding Men

The Kurds belong to the Iranian branch of the white race. Because of the open-air existence which they live, most of them have harsh features. The great majority are nominally Mohammedans but they do not practice polygamy. Some few of them near Mosul are Yezidis or Devil Worshipers. Those who are Mohammedans take their religion rather less seriously than the Arabs and even the Turks. They follow the Shiah sect, whose members are looked upon as heretics by the orthodox Moslems.

The plateau region, lying partly in old Armenia, partly in Kurdistan, where many of the most warlike Kurds live, presents a good example of the effects on man of a mixture of rugged uplands and fertile valleys. Limestone mountains and recently extinct volcanoes occupy the upper levels. Lower are magnificent canyons cut by the Tigris and Euphrates headstreams, and numerous broad, basin-shaped valleys whose floors are fertile plains.

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AN ASPHALT SPRING IN MESOPOTAMIA

This is one of the hints to the presence of oil in the great Mosul field. Asphalt springs like this probably gave the bitumen to which Genesis refers when it says "they had brick for stone, and slime they had for mortar" (see Bulletin No. 5).